WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Public Consultation on Right to Information Act

*21. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Department of Personnel and Training despite assurances did not initiate public consultations on the rules and guidelines before implementation of the Right to Information Act; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) and (b) Right to Information Act, 2005 was enacted after detailed consultation with the various stakeholders including the public, In order to carry out the provisions of the Act, Government has notified the following rules, namely:—

(1) Right to Information (Regulation of Fee and Cost) Rules, 2005; and

(2) Central Information Commission (Appeal Procedure) Rules, 2005

The Government while finalizing the Rules regarding fees and costs took into account the rules framed under various State enactments, views earlier received from the public on the rules proposed under Freedom of Information Act, 2002, views expressed in the regional meetings of Chief Secretaries and the suggestions received from Civil Society groups, etc.

As regards guidelines, Government shall bring out a Users' Guide within 18 months of the commencement of the Act, as per the requirement of Section 26 of the Act.

National Highways in Kerala

*22. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects seeking financial assistance to improve the National Highways in Kerala pending with Government for sanction;

(b) the amount of funds allotted to Kerala for the improvement of National Highways during the current year and the details of the projects; and

(c) the present stage of Kollam bypass in Kerala and the proposed plan for the implementation of subsequent phases?